

Kerry Hopes for Russia 'Change of Heart' on Syria at G20

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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John Kerry speaking at a Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing about President Barack Obama's request for congressional authorization for military intervention in Syria. **J. Scott Applewhite**

WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama will discuss Syria with President Vladimir Putin at the upcoming G20 summit in St. Petersburg in talks that could produce a Kremlin "change of heart" on how to deal with the crisis there, Secretary of State John Kerry said.

"President Obama will have ample opportunity to hear from President Putin and I'm confident they'll have a discussion about it" at the G20 meeting this week, Kerry said Tuesday in testimony to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on Syria following Obama's decision to seek congressional approval for military intervention there.

"Let's hope that the summit might produce some change of heart as the president makes the evidence available to President Putin," Kerry stated.

Asked why Russia has adopted a strong stance against current U.S. moves to carry out a military strike in Syria in response to the apparent use of chemical weapons in the civil war there — an act Washington insists was perpetrated by the government of Syrian President Bashar Assad — Kerry said, "Honestly, I don't know."

"They make an argument to some effect that we don't have evidence and that the opposition did it," Kerry said. But he added that Russia was "sincere" in efforts to help bring about a negotiated settlement to the conflict there and was cooperative on other vital security issues involving North Korea and Iran.

"We have to sort of deal with this thoughtfully," Kerry told the Senate panel.

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